



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore District

The Corps'pondent

a newsletter by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the residents of Spring Valley

August 2002

Corps holds community meeting to update residents

Sibley Hospital auditorium was the setting for a Spring Valley community meeting July 25 where Deputy District Engineer for Spring Valley Maj. Michael Peloquin briefed residents on the status of the project.

After introductions, Peloquin reviewed the comprehensive soil sampling work, stating that 96 percent of the residential and 77 percent of the non-residential properties had been sampled.

Of those properties, approximately 151 required grid sampling because certain areas on their properties indicated a level of arsenic contamination higher than the background of 12.6 parts per million, or ppm. To date, 145 have been grid sampled. Other chemicals were non-detectable at almost every location.

Time critical work

Seven properties have been identified for a time critical removal action, which began last month. These properties received this designation primarily because of their exposure risk due to high levels of arsenic contamination. The work involves removing soil to a depth of 2 feet, replacing it with clean soil and landscaping the area.

The first of these properties is nearly finished and work has

begun on another group of properties in the 4400 block of Tindall Street in the Fort Gaines neighborhood.

Non-time critical work

This terminology applies to the remaining properties with arsenic contamination over 20 ppm.

The cleanup process will be similar to the time critical work, but involves a more detailed regulatory process with a 30-day public comment period before beginning.

Later this month, the project partners will begin prioritizing these properties for removal work. Peloquin said the Corps estimates it will take four to five years to complete, but the Army has committed \$11 million a year for the work.

AU soil removal

The major said that the soil removal work was 70 percent complete at the intramural fields, and the clean soil would be backfilled starting in about a week. There are several anomalies to investigate as well. The work at the Child Development Center is nearly complete. The entire AU work is scheduled for completion in late September.

Sedgwick Trench

Peloquin said the investigation of two large anomalies previously detected on two properties

in the 5000 block of Sedgwick Street will begin in mid-August. This work will also address over two dozen small anomalies and arsenic contamination on those properties.

Barring no unusual discoveries, the work would be complete a few weeks later.

Access to Sedgwick Street between Fordham and Tilden will be controlled by the D.C. police during work hours.

Other work

Peloquin said the restoration process is under way at the Korean property, with a completion date scheduled by the end of September.

Work at the property next door at 4825 Glenbrook is postponed until fiscal year 2003.

Sarah Shapley, Restoration Advisory Board co-chair, urged residents to access the resident Spring Valley e-mail address for information on the project. She also asked that individuals provide her with their e-mail addresses.

After the presentation, residents asked questions to clarify concerns about the project.

For the complete transcript of the meeting, visit the Corps website at <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>.



From bottom left, clockwise: soil removal begins at the American University sports fields; an EOD technician overseas excavation at American University; soil has been removed to the 2-foot depth beside the first TCRA property; workers remove soil close to the foundation of the house at the first TCRA property; a worker measures the depth of the removal at American University. The soil removal work began in June at American University, and in early July at the first of seven private properties in the Spring Valley neighborhood.

(Photos by Susanne Bledsoe)

Sedgwick St. upcoming work

During the week of Aug. 12, the Spring Valley project team plans to begin the intrusive investigation for buried metallic anomalies at two properties in the 5000 block of Sedgwick Street.

The anomalies were detected last year as part of a follow on geophysical investigation at several Sedgwick Street properties located near what was once a World War I trench system.

During the excavation to identify these items, engineering safety controls will be used so no evacuations will be required. However, due to the movement of construction equipment at the two properties and as a matter of safety to the owners, the Corps has asked those residents to relocate during the daytime work and return home at night.

Residents living in the immediate vicinity of these properties will also be offered daytime relocation. The Corps has notified these residents. None of these relocations is mandatory. The

Corps estimates this work will be completed by the end of August.

Due to the amount of equipment that will be parked on Sedgwick Street in support of this work and to ensure the safety of site workers, the D.C. police will close Sedgwick Street between Fordham Road and Tilden Street to all traffic except for Sedgwick Street residents and their guests between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., weekdays beginning Aug. 12.

The street will be reopened to all traffic at the end of each workday. D.C. police will provide security at the site around the clock to ensure only authorized personnel enter the work area.

To keep the community informed about the progress of this investigation, the Corps will provide daily updates on the Spring Valley web site at: <http://www.nab.usace.army.mil/projects/WashingtonDC/springvalley.htm>, and on the project's toll-free information line at 1-800-434-0988.



The vacuum truck that workers use to extract the soil during the removal process.

Please note

Next RAB meeting

The Resident Advisory Board will not meet during the month of August.

The next RAB meeting will be Tuesday, Sept. 10, at 7 p.m. at St. David's Episcopal Church.

The public is invited to attend.

Fact sheets

The Corps recently mailed to all Spring Valley residents a two-page fact sheet that talks about the cleanup work.

The fact sheet also gives safety suggestions if you should encounter munitions or any chemical agent.

Two other fact sheets entitled, *The investigative process: ordnance and chemical agent containers* and *Spring Valley ordnance cleanup: past, present and future*, have been placed on the Corps website.

All four fact sheets are also available at the Corps trailer. If you cannot download these fact sheets, call 1-800-434-0988 and they will be mailed to you.

Before digging

Please call the D.C. Department of Health at 202-535-1755 **(if permits are required).**

If permits are not required, please call the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at 800-434-0988.



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Restoration Advisory Board Update

The Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board met July 9 at St. David's Episcopal Church, Washington, D.C.

The meeting began with an update on the status of the historical records and project files that make up the project's Administrative Record File and Information Repository.

Maj. Michael Peloquin reported that efforts are under way to organize all the information in a manner that is more user-friendly. He indicated that documents relevant to project management decisions and the foundation of the Administrative Record are available at the Palisades Library. A complete index of these documents is also present at the library.

Additionally, many more documents relevant to the project will be available at the Spring Valley resident office located behind Sibley Hospital within the next few months.

Peloquin updated the RAB on the document designed to track the diverse project issues that are being investigated and resolved over time. The document, known as the Evergreen List, is a tool to track project progress and ensure that partner and RAB concerns get addressed over the long term.

Mark Baker, historian in Baltimore District, gave an update on the status of the search for additional AUES files from Fort McClellan.

He indicated that it is his belief that most of the materials will turn out to be duplicates of documents and photographs the Corps has already reviewed.

Baker also noted that the Corps is looking into other historical documents released or uncovered since the Corps conducted its original record search in 1993.

Two representatives from the General Accounting Office gave a presentation on the recently released GAO blue cover report on Spring Valley entitled, *Environmental Contamination: Many Uncertainties Affect the Progress of the Spring Valley Cleanup* (GAO-02-556).

Community RAB members expressed frustration that the report did little more than rehash readily known facts about the project and did not draw any conclusions, formulate an objective opinion on the quality of the investigation or make recommendations for improvements.

The GAO representatives acknowledged the frustrations of the community, but stated that it had fulfilled the requirements of

the task it was assigned by members of Congress.

The RAB's Science Task Group gave an update on its first meeting. Dorothy Zolandz indicated that the task group believes more historical analysis by the Corps is needed.

Additionally they will be addressing both resident and contractor exposure scenarios as part of their review of Kent Slowinski's concerns about the project soil sampling plan.

At present the group sees few answers for the case of contractor exposures. Community member Mark Leone has joined the Science Task Group.

The entire body acknowledged that care would need to be taken to ensure that there is not redundancy between the Science Task Group's efforts and what is assigned to the RAB's Technical Assistance for Public Participation (TAPP) contractor, which is funded through Spring Valley project funds.

The minutes of the meeting are available on the Corps website.

The Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board will not be meeting in August. The next meeting will be Sept. 10, 2002.